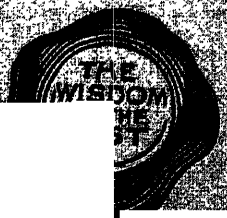


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THE WISDOM OF THE EAST SERIES

EDITED BY

L. CRANMER-BYNG

ALAN W. WATTS

HIMALAYAS OF THE SOUL

To
Mrs. M. MACKENZIE, M.A.
LATE PROFESSOR OF EDUCATION
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CARDIFF
GRATITUDE IN ETERNITY
A. I. E.

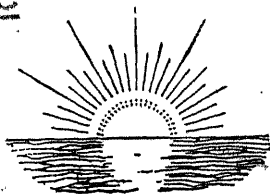
HIMALAYAS OF THE SOUL

Translations from the Sanskrit of the Principal Upanishads

BY J. MASCARÓ, M.A. CANTAB.
READER OF ENGLISH, UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA

WITH A PREFACE BY
SIR S. RADHAKRISHNAN
AND A FOREWORD BY
E. J. THOMAS, M.A., LITT.D.

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EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the editors of this series is a very definite one. They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West, the old world of Thought, and the new of Action. They are confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour.

L. CRANMER-BYNG.
ALAN W. WATTS.

50, ALBEMARLE STREET,
LONDON, W.1.

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PREFACE

THE Upanishads are the chief documents on which the Hindu religion in its vastness and variety rests. They also constitute the inspiration of the great Buddhist religion. In them we find the reactions of highly sensitive souls to the inexhaustible mystery of life, the wrestlings of earnest minds with the ultimate problems. We are not so far removed in spirit from the period of the Upanishads as to be untouched by its problems or unmoved by its hopes and fears.

They speak of one Spirit without a second, whose nature is unknowable and incomprehensible. The negative definitions refer to the distance between time and eternity, between appearance and reality. In the presence of the Supreme we are terrified and afraid and feel that if we are to be saved at all, it can only be by the grace of the Lord. "He whom the Self chooses, by him the Self can be gained" (Katha Up., I, 2, 23). But there is the other side of the process. There must be a passage from time to eternity, from appearance to the absolute. Otherwise, philosophy and religion become an irrelevance. Though the nature of the Supreme is unknowable, it is yet realizable by effort

PREFACE

and discipline in the depths of one's soul. When this shattering experience which makes us new men arises, we stand no longer over against the Supreme as trembling banished strangers. We forget the otherness of God as well as our own otherness and feel "Aham Brahmasmi," "I am Brahman." Immanence and transcendence are not exclusive of each other; they represent the double movement in religious effort and experience.

It is difficult to translate satisfactorily classics which are at once literature and philosophy, poetry and religion. The delicate allusiveness of the original is an almost insoluble problem for the translator. Mr. Mascaró has done his best and has brought to his task a keen intellect, a reverent heart and an artist's skill. He would like his book to be read not only with the eyes but with the ears.

S. RADHAKRISHNAN.

OXFORD,

June 2, 1938.

FOREWORD

It is no longer the fashion to describe religion as "morality touched by emotion." The religious feeling is something distinct from the ethical feeling or the æsthetic or any other. In its fullest expression it may be called cosmic. It is the emotion felt by the mystic when he realizes his relation to the whole and his harmony with it ; and at all times it has been the poet with his supreme powers of utterance who, as prophet or seer, has been the revealer of cosmic truth.

The Upanishads, the utterances of the earliest sages and philosophers of India, show how the human mind at one bound broke through the trammels of polytheism and an elaborate system of ritual and sacrifice. Problems remained for the philosophers to solve, but the Indian thinkers never abandoned their first principles. Moreover, there is still much in these early thoughts that expresses peculiarly Indian notions, and the difficulty for Western readers has always been to realize how behind these ancient concepts lies the enthusiastic revelation of truths that are still actual for seekers of to-day.

This "freshness of an early world" seems to me to have been admirably expressed and transmuted into English by

FOREWORD

Mr. Mascaró. Starting from the actual words of the oldest of the Aryan languages, he has exercised the sympathy and insight, as well as the literary skill, needed to make these once thrilling words live again for us. I can imagine no better introduction than this to the words of the sages, which link not only East with West, but also the religious thought of to-day with that of twenty-five centuries ago.

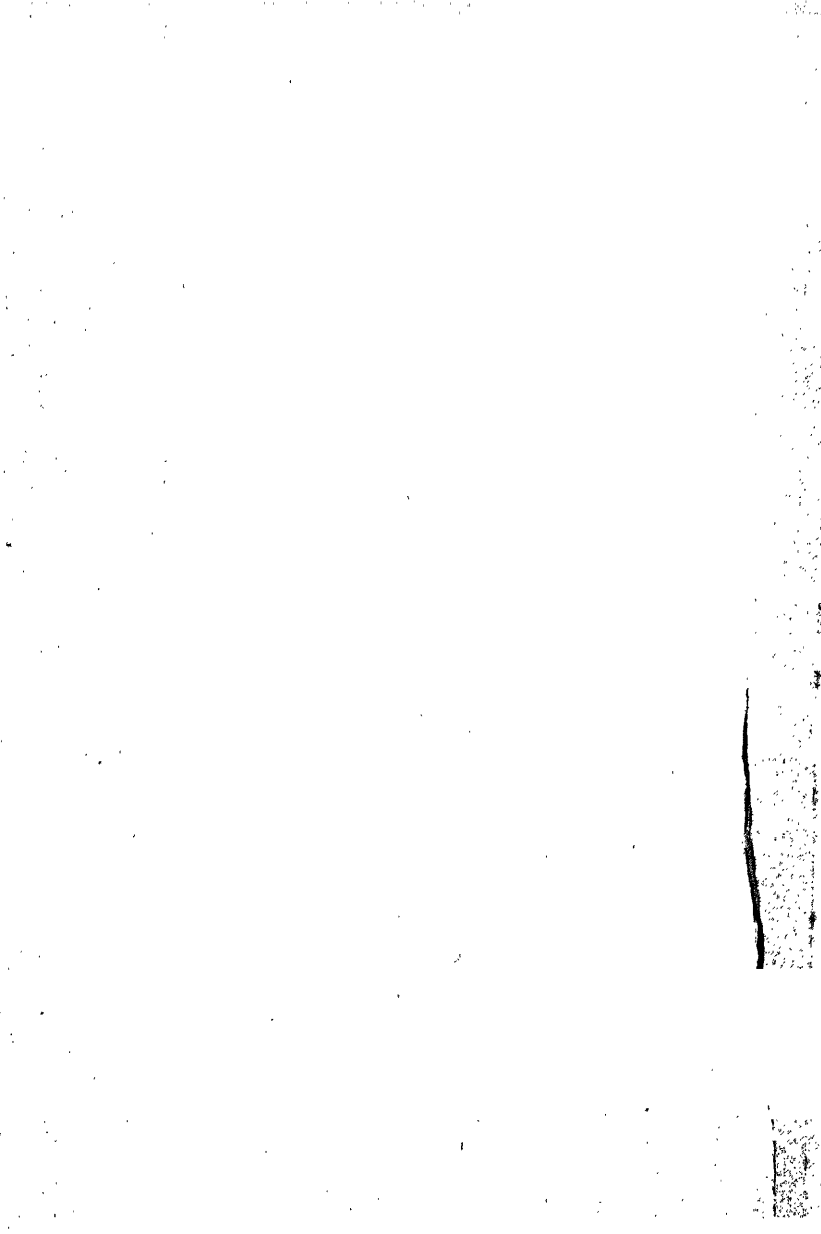
E. J. THOMAS.

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INTRODUCTION

IF a Bible of India were compiled, if Sanskrit could find a group of translators with the same feeling for beauty of language and the same love for the sacred texts in the original as the Bible has found in England, eternal treasures of old wisdom and poetry would enrich the times of to-day. Amongst those compositions, some of them living words long before writing was introduced, the Vedas, the Upanishads and the Bhagavad-Gītā would rise above the rest like Himalayas of the Spirit of man.

We know practically nothing about the authors of the Upanishads. We only know that some of the most important parts were compiled about 600 B.C. and that many are of a much later date, after further centuries of spiritual experience. But their words belong not only to a period of time, they belong to the Spirit of man in his wandering from the transient to the Eternal.

In moments of dejection, when waves of materialism seem to be drowning our frail vessel, how comforting it is to cling fast to the raft of pure idealism left to us by the seers of the Spirit in times long past. When the very word "idealism" is used by many as a synonym for foolishness, how refreshing

INTRODUCTION

it is to take refuge in the words of ancient poets whose eye glances "from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven."

The composers of the Upanishads were thinkers and poets, they had the vision of the poet; and the poet knows well that if poetry takes us away from a lower reality of daily life it is only to lead us to the vision of a higher Reality even in this daily life, where limitations give way for the poet to the joy of liberation.

These compositions are as much above the mere archaeological curiosity of some scholars as light is above its definition. Scholarship is necessary to bring to us the fruits of ancient wisdom, but only an elevation of thought and emotion can help us to enjoy them and transform them into life.

One of the messages of the Upanishads is that the Spirit can only be known through union with Him, and not through mere learning. And can any amount of learning make us feel love, or see beauty or hear the "unheard melodies"? Some have only seen the variety of thought in the Upanishads, not their underlying unity. To them the words in the sacred texts might be applied: "Who sees variety and not unity wanders on from death to death."

The spirit of the Upanishads is the Spirit of the Universe. Brahman, God Himself, is their underlying spirit. The Christian must feel that Brahman is God, and the Hindu must feel that God is Brahman. Unless a feeling of reverence independent of the barriers of names, can be felt for the Ineffable, the saying of the Upanishads is true: "words are

INTRODUCTION

weariness," the same idea expressed by the prophet that "of making many books there is no end."

The Holy Spirit may be the nearest translation of Brahman in Christian language. Whilst God the Father and God the Son are in the foreground of the mind of many Christians, the Holy Spirit seems to receive less adoration. And in India the Brahman of the Upanishads is not as popular as Śiva, Vishnu, or Krishna. Even Brahmā, the manifestation of Brahman as creator, and not to be confused with Him, is not living in the daily devotions of the Hindu, as are the two other gods of the trinity, Śiva and Vishnu. The Upanishad doctrine is not a religion of the many; but rather the Spirit behind all religions is their central theme repeated in such a wonderful variety of ways.

Brahman in the Universe, God in His transcendence and immanence is also the Spirit of man, the Self in every one and in all, Ātman. Thus the momentous statement is made in the Upanishads that God must not be sought as something far away, separate from us, but rather as the very inmost of us, as the higher Self in us above the limitations of our little self. In rising to the best in us we rise to the Self in us, to Brahman, to God Himself. Thus when the sage of the Upanishads is pressed for a definition of God, he remains silent, meaning that God is silence. When asked again to express God in words, he says: "Neti, neti," "not this, not this"; but when pressed for a positive explanation he utters the sublimely simple words: "Tat tvam asi," "Thou art That."

INTRODUCTION

According to the Upanishads, the reality of God can only be apprehended in a consciousness of joy that is beyond ordinary consciousness. The silent voice of the Eternal is perpetually whispering in us His melodies everlasting. The radiance of the Infinite is everywhere, but our ears cannot hear and our eyes cannot see : the Eternal cannot be grasped by the transient senses or the transient mind. This is beautifully expressed in the Taittirīya Upanishad : " Words and mind go to Him, but reach Him not and return. But he who knows the joy of Brahman fears no more."

Only the Eternal in us can lead us to the Eternal, only when the transient has become Eternal can a man say : " I am He."

Brahman is described as immanent and transcendent, within all and outside all. If the all is imagined as a triangle, the apex might be imagined as God transcendent, who in His expansion creates matter out of Himself, not out of nothing, and thus becomes immanent until the end of evolution when the immanent has all again become transcendent in an ascension of evolution towards Him. Why? For the joy of creation. Why is there evil? For the joy of good arising from it. Why darkness? That light may shine the more. Why suffering? For the instruction of the soul and the joy of sacrifice. Why the infinite play of creation and evolution? For Ānandam, pure joy.

In this rising from non-Self to Self, from unconsciousness to consciousness, and from this to supreme Consciousness, there is a process of unselfishness. The more the lower self

INTRODUCTION

is forgotten in good works, and in the realization of the beautiful and the true, the quicker becomes the process of evolution.

The self-training for the vision of the unity of Ātman and Brahman is called Yoga. Later on it was developed with such a wealth of detail and observation that its study should offer much deep interest to the Western psychologist. In the Upanishads is found the conception of a fourth state of consciousness, above waking, dreaming and deep sleep.

The law of evolution called Karma explains the apparent injustice in the world with sublime simplicity. There is a law of cause and effect in the moral world. We are the builders of our own destiny, and the results are not limited to one life, since our Spirit that was never born and will never die must come again and take to itself a body, that the lower self may have the reward of its works. Good shall lead to good, and evil to evil. From good joy shall come, and from evil shall come suffering. And thus the great evolution flows on towards perfection.

There are two points that seem to have puzzled readers of these sacred texts, and I venture an explanation: the problem of personality, and of the final union with Brahman.

It has been thought that because matter and the lower personality have only a relative reality, later on to be called "māyā," illusion, something that passes away and is not eternal reality, that our personality, that personality so dear to us, has been considered unimportant and neglected.

Does it mean that because Shakespeare transformed his

INTRODUCTION

mind into a thousand minds, that because in his all-embracing sympathy he became for a time a Hamlet or a Falstaff, his personality is forgotten? In the process of creation the little self is forgotten, only to emerge much greater in the march towards the Eternal; the transient is left behind, but the transient becomes Eternal. "Who knows God becomes God," says the Muṇḍaka Upanishad.

And when all the transient has been left behind, when final liberation has been attained, when our little self is lost in the greater Self in us and in all, as a drop of water is lost in the sea, does it mean that all consciousness is lost? After the death of the lower self, when the small drop of human consciousness has become one with the ocean of Consciousness, when in the suggestive words of the Brihadāranyaka Upanishad the seer is alone in an ocean, "Salila eko draṣṭādvaito bhavati," does it mean that consciousness is lost? Yes, says Yājñavalkya to his wife in the same Upanishad; for "how can the Knower be known?" But does this not mean that the little self has then become the Self supreme and not only has the consciousness of his long experience, but has access to the Consciousness of all, not only has the book of his own past, but also the Book of the Universe?

How could the union with God be unconsciousness, unless God was unconsciousness? In the image of St. Teresa, the silkworm has died and has become a beautiful butterfly. Free from its limitations, the little self forgets its limited life in the boundless ocean of life. It is not a death, but a victory over death, a rising and a resurrection.

INTRODUCTION

So little is this "our life neglected in the Upanishads that on our actions during this life depends all future life, and even life everlasting. So important is this life that in the Katha Upanishad it is stated that the Spirit can only be seen in this life, or in the highest heaven, but not in the regions of the departed or in the lower heavens. The importance given to this life is clear behind the symbolism.

The joy of the final union is felt by St. John of the Cross when he describes the Beloved as "the silent music" and "the sound of solitude." And this final union is described by St. Teresa in words that remind us of the Upanishads two thousand years before. It is like : "water falling from heaven into a river or fountain, where all becomes one water, and it is not possible to divide or separate the water of the river from that which fell from heaven ; or when a little stream enters the sea so that henceforth there shall be no means of separation." And in a different way it is the joy felt by Wordsworth, or by the greatest poet of the Catalan literary renaissance, Maragall, when he exclaims :

"Tot semblava un món en flor
i l'ànima n'era jo."

"All seemed a world in flower, and I was the soul of this world."

And this message of idealism and of the One behind the many comes to us when matter is thought to be omnipotent, and when the barriers of separation between nation and nation and between man and man are rising higher and

INTRODUCTION

higher, when the word idealism is met with scorn by those who declare the gospel of brute force, when intolerance is proclaimed a virtue and when fanaticism is mistaken for faith, when self-interest is declared the rule of international relations, when treasures of the earth are sought far more than treasures in heaven, and when the gospel of liberty and love is abandoned for one of tyranny and hate.

To one and all comes this message of sages of olden times who in silence were loving to all. If modern man in his pride showed them the wonders of science, including the means of destruction, they would smile and say: "Great is the power of man, but the Spirit is not this, is not this." The path of the Spirit is the path of purity and love, not that of brutal power and hate. Only in God is there real power, and only in virtue real strength.

And to those who in fear see the sword of destruction shining, and hear the thunder of the storm, the voice of faith of the Upanishads says: "Brahmābhayam," "in God there is no fear."

J. MASCARÓ.

DOWNING COLLEGE,
CAMBRIDGE.
Spring, 1938.

ISĀ UPANISHAD

BEHOLD the Universe in the glory of God : and all that lives and moves on earth. Leaving the transient, find joy in the Eternal : set not your heart on another's possession.

Working thus, a man may wish for a life of a hundred years. Only actions done in God bind not the soul of man.

There are demon-haunted worlds, regions of utter darkness. Whoever in life neglects the Spirit goes to that darkness after death.

The Spirit, without moving, is swifter than the mind ; the senses cannot reach Him : He is ever beyond them. Standing still, He overtakes those who run. To the ocean of His being the spirit of life leads the streams of action.

He moves, and He moves not. He is far, and He is near. He is within all, and He is outside all.

Who sees all beings in his own Self, and his own Self in all beings, loses all fear.

When a sage sees this great Unity and his Self has become all beings, what delusion and what sorrow can ever be near him ?

The Spirit filled all with His radiance. He is incorporeal

ĪŚĀ UPANISHAD

and invulnerable, pure and untouched by evil. He is the supreme seer and thinker, immanent and transcendent. He placed all things in the path of Eternity.

Into deep darkness fall those who follow action. Into deeper darkness fall those who follow knowledge.

One is the outcome of knowledge, and another is the outcome of action. Thus have we heard from the ancient sages who explained this truth to us.

He who knows both knowledge and action, with action overcomes death and with knowledge reaches immortality.

Into deep darkness fall those who follow the immanent. Into deeper darkness fall those who follow the transcendent.

One is the outcome of the transcendent, and another is the outcome of the immanent. Thus have we heard from the ancient sages who explained this truth to us.

He who knows both the transcendent and the immanent, with the immanent overcomes death and with the transcendent reaches immortality.

The face of truth remains hidden behind a circle of gold. Unveil it, O god of light, that I who love the true may see !

O life-giving sun, offspring of the Lord of creation, solitary seer of heaven ! Spread thy light and withdraw thy blinding splendour that I may behold thy radiant form : that Spirit far away within thee is my own inmost Spirit.

May life go to immortal life, and the body go to ashes.

PRAYERS

OM. O my soul, remember past strivings, remember !
O my soul, remember past strivings, remember !

By the path of good lead us to final bliss, O fire divine,
thou god who knowest all ways. Deliver us from wander-
ing evil. Prayers and adoration we offer unto thee.

KENA UPANISHAD

PART I

WHO sends the mind to wander afar? Who first drives life to start on its journey? Who impels us to utter these words? Who is the Spirit behind the eye and the ear?

It is the ear of the ear, the eye of the eye, and the Word of words, the mind of mind, and the life of life. Those who follow wisdom pass beyond and, on leaving this world, become immortal.

There the eye goes not, nor words, nor mind. We know not, we cannot understand, how He can be explained: He is above the known and He is above the unknown. Thus have we heard from the ancient sages who explained this truth to us.

What cannot be spoken with words, but whereby words are spoken. Know that alone to be Brahman, the Spirit; and not what people here adore.

What cannot be thought with the mind, but whereby the mind can think. Know that alone to be Brahman, the Spirit; and not what people here adore.

What cannot be seen with the eye, but whereby the eye

THE SPIRIT

can see. Know that alone to be Brahman, the Spirit ; and not what people here adore.

What cannot be heard with the ear, but whereby the ear can hear. Know that alone to be Brahman, the Spirit ; and not what people here adore.

What cannot be indrawn with breath, but whereby breath is indrawn. Know that alone to be Brahman, the Spirit ; and not what people here adore.

PART II

Master. If you think "I know well," little in truth you know. You only perceive that appearance of Brahman that lies in the senses and is in you. Pursue your meditation.

Disciple. I mean to know.

I do not imagine "I know Him well," and yet I cannot say "I know Him not." Who of us knows this, knows Him ; and not who says "I know Him not."

He comes to the thought of those who know Him beyond thought, not to those who imagine He can be attained by thought. He is unknown to the learned and known to the simple.

He is known in the ecstasy of an awakening which opens the door of life eternal. By the Self we obtain power, and by wisdom we obtain Eternity.

For a man who has known Him, the light of truth shines ; for one who has not known, there is darkness. The wise

KENA UPANISHAD

who have seen Him in every being, on leaving this life, attain life immortal.

PART III

Once upon a time, Brahman, the Spirit Supreme, won a victory for the gods. And the gods thought in their pride : "We alone attained this victory, ours alone is the glory."

Brahman saw it and appeared to them, but they knew Him not. "Who is that being that fills us with wonder?", they cried.

And they spoke to Agni, the god of fire. "O god all-knowing, go and see who is that being that fills us with wonder."

Agni ran towards Him and Brahman asked : "Who are you?" "I am the god of fire," he said, "the god who knows all things."

"What power is in you?", asked Brahman. "I can burn all things on earth."

And Brahman placed a straw before him, saying : "Burn this." The god of fire strove with all his power, but was unable to burn it. He then returned to the other gods and said : "I could not find out who was that being that fills us with wonder."

Then they spoke to Vayu, the god of the air. "O Vayu, go and see who is that being that fills us with wonder."

Vayu ran towards Him and Brahman asked : "Who are

BRAHMAN AND THE GODS

you ? ” “ I am Vayu, the god of the air,” he said, “ Mata-risvan, the air that moves in space.”

“ What power is in you ? ”, asked Brahman. “ In a whirlwind I can carry away all there is on earth.”

And Brahman placed a straw before him saying : “ Blow this away.” The god of the air strove with all his power, but was unable to move it. He returned to the other gods and said : “ I could not find out who was that being that fills us with wonder.”

Then the gods spoke to Indra, the god of thunder : “ O giver of earthly goods, go and see who is that being that fills us with wonder.” And Indra ran towards Brahman, the Spirit Supreme, but He disappeared.

Then in the same region of the sky the god saw a lady, of radiant beauty. She was Umā, divine wisdom, the daughter of the mountains of snow. “ Who is that being that fills us with wonder ? ”, he asked.

PART IV

“ He is Brahman, the Spirit Supreme,” she answered. “ Rejoice in Him, since through Him you attained the glory of victory.”

And the gods Agni, Vayu and Indra excelled the other gods, for they were the first that came near Brahman and they first knew He was the Spirit Supreme.

And thus Indra, the god of thunder, excelled all other

KENA UPANISHAD

gods, for he came nearest to Brahman and He first knew that He was the Spirit Supreme.

Concerning Whom it is said :

He is seen in Nature in the wonder of a flash of lightning.

He comes to the soul in the wonder of a flash of vision.

His name is Tadvanam, which translated means "The End of love-longing." As Tadvanam He should have adoration. All beings will love such a lover of the Lord.

Master. You asked me to explain the Upanishad, the sacred wisdom. The Upanishad has been explained to you. In truth I have been telling you the sacred teaching concerning Brahman.

.

KATĪHA UPANISHAD

PART I

CHAPTER I

VĀJAŚRAVASA gave away all his possessions, out of desire for heaven. He had a son called Nachiketas.

Though only a boy, while the offerings were being given, faith came to him and he thought :

“ By giving such cows that can calve no more and can give no more milk, and are even past drinking their water and are even past eating their grass, surely no man goes to heaven. He goes to worlds of no joy.”

And thinking of offering himself, he said to his father : “ Father, to whom will you give me ? ” He had asked once and twice and three times, when his father answered : “ I will give you to death.”

Nachiketas. At the head of many I go, and I go in the midst of many. What may be the work of Death that to-day must be done through me ?

Remember how the men of old passed away, and how those of days to come will also pass away : a mortal ripens like corn, and like corn is born again.

Nachiketas had to wait three nights in the abode of Death.

KATHA UPANISHAD

A Voice. As the spirit of holy fire a Brahmin guest enters a house : bring the offering of water, O god of Death.

Unwise is the man in whose house no hospitality is given to a Brahmin : he loses his hopes for the future ; and the merits he won in the past, when he gave to gods and to men, and met good people and spoke kind words ; and he loses his present possessions, his sons and his all.

Death. Since you have come to my abode as a sacred guest, and you have had no hospitality during three nights, choose then three boons.

Nachiketas. O Lord of Death ! May my father's anger be appeased and may he be happy and free from anxiety ; and may he remember me and welcome me after my leaving you. This be my first boon.

Death. Through my favour your father will remember you and love you as before ; and having seen you free from the mouth of death, with his anger appeased, sweet will be his sleep at night.

Nachiketas. There is no fear in the regions of heaven : old age and death are not there. Having passed both, they rejoice in heaven, beyond hunger and thirst and sorrow.

Those in heaven attain immortality. You know, O Death, that sacred fire which leads to heaven. Explain it to me, since I have faith. Be this my second boon.

Death. I know that sacred fire which leads to heaven, O Nachiketas ! Listen. That fire which is the means of

THE SACRED FIRE

attaining the infinite worlds, and is also their foundation, is hidden in the sacred place of the heart.

And Death told him of the fire of creation, the beginning of worlds, and of the altar of the fire-sacrifice, of how many bricks it should be built and how they should be placed. Nachiketas repeated the teaching. Death was pleased and went on.

A further boon I give you to-day. This fire of sacrifice shall be known by your name. Take also from me this chain of many forms.

One who lights three times this sacred fire, and attains union with the Three, and performs the three holy actions, passes beyond earth life and death. He then knows the god of fire, the god who knows all things, and through knowledge and meditation he attains the peace supreme.

He who, knowing the Three, builds up the altar of fire-sacrifice and performs three times the sacrifice of Nachiketas, drives away the bonds of death and, passing beyond sorrow, finds joy in the regions of heaven.

This is the fire that leads to heaven which you chose as the second gift. Men will call it the Nachiketas fire-sacrifice. Choose now the third boon.

Nachiketas. When a man dies, this doubt arises : some say " he is " and some say " he is not." Teach me the truth and be this my third boon.

Death. This doubt arose even to the gods in times of

KATHA UPANISHAD

old : for subtle and mysterious is the law of life and death. Ask for another boon. Release me from this.

Nachiketas. Indeed this doubt arose even to the gods, and you say, O Death, that it is difficult to understand ; but no greater teacher than you can explain it, and there is no other boon so great as this,

Death. Take horses and gold and cattle and elephants ; choose sons and grandsons that shall live a hundred years. Have vast expanses of land, and live as many years as you desire.

Or choose another gift that you deem equal to this, and enjoy it with wealth and long life. Be a ruler of this vast earth. I will give you all your desires.

Ask for any wishes in the world of mortals, however hard to obtain. To attend on you I will give you fair maidens with their chariots and musical instruments. But, O Nachiketas, ask me not the secrets of death.

Nachiketas. All these pleasures pass away, O End of all ! They destroy the power of vitality. And indeed how short is all life ! Keep the horses and dancing and singing.

Man cannot be satisfied with wealth. Shall we enjoy wealth with you in sight ? Shall we live whilst you are in power ? I can only ask for the boon I have asked.

When a mortal here below knows of the joys of immortal life, can he wish to live long here for the pleasures of passion and of glittering beauty ?

THE TWO PATHS

Solve then this doubt as to the meaning of the great beyond. Grant me the gift that pierces the veil of mystery. This is the only favour Nachiketas can choose.

PART I

CHAPTER II

Death. There is the path of permanent joy, and there is the path of transient pleasure. Both attract the soul. Who follows the first comes to good ; who follows pleasure reaches not the End.

The two paths lie in front of man. Pondering on them, the wise chooses the higher path ; the fool takes the path of pleasure.

You have pondered, Nachiketas, on pleasures and you have rejected them. You have not accepted that chain of possessions wherewith men bind themselves and beneath which they sink.

There is the path of wisdom and the path of unwisdom. They are far apart and lead to different ends. You are, Nachiketas, a follower of the path of wisdom : many pleasures move you not.

Abiding in the midst of ignorance, thinking themselves wise and learned, fools go round hither and thither, like blind led by the blind.

What lies beyond life shines not to the childish, careless, deluded by wealth. " This is the only world : there is no other," they say ; and they go to death again and again.

KATHA UPANISHAD

Not many are those who hear of Him ; and of those not many reach Him. Wonderful is he who can teach about Him ; and wise is he who can be taught. Wonderful is he who knows Him when taught by the wise.

He cannot be taught by one who has not reached Him ; and He cannot be reached by much thinking. The way to Him is a Teacher : He is higher than the highest thoughts and is above all thought.

O beloved ! This sacred knowledge is not obtained through reasoning ; but taught by a Teacher it is easily obtained. You have found him : steady is your purpose. May I have another pupil like you.

I know that treasures pass away and that the Eternal is not reached through the transient. I have thus laid the fire of the Nachiketa-sacrifice, and by burning in it the transient I have reached the Eternal.

O Nachiketas ! Before your eyes have been spread the fulfilment of all desire, the dominion of the world, the eternity of action, the shore where there is no fear, the greatness of fame and boundless spaces. With strength and wisdom you have renounced them all.

When the wise, through spiritual concentration, rests his mind on the God that is beyond time, hard to be seen, dwelling in the mystery of things and in the heart of man, then he rises above joy and sorrow.

When a man has heard and has understood and, selecting

THE WORD SUPREME

the essence, reaches the Inmost ; then he rejoices, having attained Joy : Nachiketas is like a house open for the Lord.

Nachiketas. Tell me what you see beyond right and wrong, beyond what is done or not done, beyond past and future.

Death. I will tell you the Word that all the Vedas glorify, all self-sacrifice expresses, all sacred studies and holy life seek. That Word is OM.

That Word is the everlasting Spirit : that Word is the highest End. When that sacred Word is known, all longings are fulfilled.

It is the surest means of salvation ; it is the highest help. When that supreme help is known, one rejoices in the heaven of Brahman.

The Ātman, the Self, is never born and never dies. It is without a cause and is eternally changeless. It is beyond time, unborn, permanent and everlasting. It does not die when the body dies.

When the slayer imagines that he kills, and when the slain imagines that he dies, both are under delusion. The Spirit of the slayer does not kill : the Spirit of the slain does not die.

Concealed in the heart of beings lies the Ātman, the Spirit, the Self ; smaller than the smallest atom, greater than the greatest spaces. The man whose human will is peaceful, leaving sorrows behind, beholds the glory of the Ātman through the grace of the Creator.

KATHA UPANISHAD

Resting, He wanders afar ; sleeping, He goes everywhere. Who else but my Self can know that God of joy and of sadness ?

When the wise realizes the omnipresent Spirit of glory, who rests invisible in the visible and permanent in the impermanent, then he goes beyond sorrow.

Not through much learning is the Ātman reached, not through the intellect or sacred teaching. It is reached by the chosen of Him. To His chosen the Ātman reveals His glory.

Not even through deep knowledge can the Ātman be reached, unless evil ways are abandoned, and there is rest in the senses, concentration of the mind and peace in one's heart.

Who knows in truth where He is ? The majesty of His power carries away priests and warriors, and death itself is carried away.

PART I

CHAPTER III

In the highest regions of the heart there are the higher and lower selves enjoying the results of good actions. The seers of Brahman, the keepers of the five fires, and those who kindle the triple fire of Nachiketa, speak of them as "light" and "shade."

May we master the spiritual fire of Nachiketa, the bridge for those who sacrifice, for those who long to reach the shore where there is no fear, the supreme eternal Spirit.

THE LORD OF THE CHARIOT

Know the Ātman as Lord of a chariot ; and the body as the chariot itself. Know intelligence as the charioteer ; and the mind indeed as the reins.

The horses, they say, are the senses ; and their paths are the objects of sense. "That which enjoys" is the soul, if united with senses and mind.

Of him who has no understanding and whose mind is uncontrolled, his senses become wild and restless, like horses that are untamed.

But he who has understanding and a mind always controlled, then his senses become peaceful, like horses that are well trained.

He who has no understanding, is careless and always impure, reaches not the abode of peace ; but wanders on through life and death.

But he who has understanding, is careful and is always pure, reaches then the abode of peace, from which he never returns.

The man whose chariot is driven by reason, holding well the reins of his mind, reaches the end of his journey, the supreme pervading Spirit.

Beyond the senses are their objects, and beyond the objects is the mind ; beyond the mind is pure reason, and beyond reason the great Self.

Beyond the great Self is the Unmanifest ; and beyond the Unmanifest the Spirit. Nothing is beyond the Spirit : He is the Path supreme and the End of the Path.

KATHA UPANISHAD

The light of the Ātman, the Self, is invisible, concealed in all beings. It is seen by the seers of the subtle, with clear and keen inner vision.

The wise should restrain speech in mind, mind in the knowing self, the knowing self in the great Self, and the great Self in the Self of peace.

Awake, arise ! Strive for the best, and attain the light of knowledge : sages say the path is difficult to tread, and thin as the edge of a razor.

The Ātman is beyond sound and form, without touch and taste and perfume. It is eternal, unchangeable and without beginning or end : indeed above reasoning. When consciousness of the Ātman manifests itself, man becomes free from the jaws of death.

The wise one who hears and tells this ancient story of Nachiketas, explained by the god of Death, finds glory in the world of Brahman.

He who, filled with devotion, recites this supreme mystery at the gathering of Brahmins, or at the ceremony of the Śrādhā for the departed, prepares for Eternity, yea he prepares for Eternity.

PART II

CHAPTER I

The Self-existent created the senses to go outwards : they go to the world of matter outside, not to the Self within. Only a few sages, in their longing for immortality,

THIS IN TRUTH IS THAT

have turned their vision inwards and have seen the inner Self.

The childish run after outward pleasures and fall into the snares of vast-embracing death. But the wise have known immortality, and do not seek the permanent among the impermanent.

This by which we perceive colours and sounds, perfumes and kisses of love ; by which alone we attain knowledge ; by which verily we can be conscious of anything.

This in truth is That.

When a sage realizes that it is through the great and omnipresent Self in us that we are conscious in waking or in dreaming, then he transcends the regions of sorrow.

When he knows the Ātman, the Self, the inner life, enjoying like a bee the sweetness of the flowers of the senses, the Lord of what was and of what will be, then he transcends the regions of fear.

This in truth is That.

The god, the Spirit, who in the beginning was born from the fire of thought before the waters were ; who appeared in the elements and rests, having entered the heart :

This in truth is That.

The goddess of Infinity who comes as Life-power and Nature ; who was born from the elements and rests, having entered the heart :

This in truth is That.

KATHA UPANISHAD

“Agni, the all-knowing god of fire, concealed in the fire-sticks as the babe in the womb of the mother, worthy of daily adoration by the hearts of the awakened ones and by oblations of pious men.”

This in truth is That.

Whence the rising sun does come, and into which it sets again ; wherein all the gods find peace, and beyond which no man can go.

This in truth is That.

What is here is also there, and what is there is also here. Who sees variety and not the Unity, wanders on from death to death.

Even by the mind this truth is to be learned : there are not many but only One. Who sees variety and not the Unity wanders on from death to death.

The soul dwells within us, a flame the size of a thumb. When it is known as the Lord of the past and the future, then ceases all fear.

This in truth is That.

Like a flame without smoke, the size of a thumb, is the soul ; the Lord of the past and the future, the same both to-day and to-morrow.

This in truth is That.

As water raining on a mountain-ridge runs down the rocks on all sides, so the man who only sees a variety of things runs after them on all sides.

THE CASTLE OF ELEVEN GATES

But as pure water raining on pure water becomes one and the same, so becomes, O Nachiketas, the soul of the sage who knows.

PART II

CHAPTER II

The pure eternal Spirit dwells in the castle of eleven gates of the body. By ruling this castle, man is free from sorrows and, free from all obstacles, attains liberation.

“In space He is the sun, and He is the wind in the sky ; at the altar He is the priest, and the Soma wine in the jar. He dwells in men and in gods, in holy sacrifice and in the vast sky. He is in earth and in water and in the mountain-rocks. He is Truth and Power.”

The senses divine adore that god that is in the heart, and He rules the breath of life, breathing in and breathing out.

When the ties that bind the Spirit to the body are unloosened and the Spirit is set free, what remains then ?

This in truth is That.

A mortal lives not through breath that goes in and that goes out. The source of his life is another and this causes the breath to flow.

I will tell you, O beloved, of the mysterious eternal Spirit ; and of what happens to the Self after death.

The Self may go to the womb of a mother and thus obtain a new body. It even may go into plants, according to its works and knowledge.

KATHA UPANISHAD

The Spirit that is awake in sleep and creates the wonder of dreams, He is the Spirit of light and in truth He is called the Immortal. All the worlds rest on that Spirit and beyond Him no one can go.

This in truth is That.

As fire, though one, takes new forms in all things that burn ; the Spirit, though one, takes new forms in all things that live. He is within all, and is also outside.

As the wind, though one, takes new forms in whatever it enters ; the Spirit, though one, takes new forms in whatever that lives. He is within all, and is also outside.

As the sun that beholds the world is untouched by earthly impurities, so the Spirit that is in all things is untouched by external sufferings.

There is one Ruler, the Spirit that is in all things, who transforms His one form into many. Only the wise who see Him in their souls attain the joy eternal.

He is the Eternal among things that pass away, pure Consciousness of conscious beings, the One who fulfils the prayers of many. Only the wise who see Him in their souls attain the peace eternal.

“ This is That,” thus they realize the ineffable joy supreme. How can This be known ? Does He give light or does He reflect light ?

There the sun shines not, nor the moon, nor the stars ; lightnings shine not there and much less earthly fire. From

HIS LIGHT CAN BE SEEN IN THIS LIFE

His light all these give light, and His radiance illumines all creation.

PART II

CHAPTER III

The Eternal Tree has its roots in the sky and its branches falling on earth. It is Brahman, pure Spirit, and in truth He is called the Immortal. All the worlds rest on that Spirit and beyond Him no one can go.

This in truth is That.

From His life comes the universe, and in His life the universe moves. In His majesty is the terror of thunder. Those who know this attain immortality.

From fear of Him fire burns and from fear of Him the sun shines. From fear of Him the clouds and winds, and death itself, move on their way.

He who knows Him not in this life, before the body passes away, must be born and die again in new worlds and new creations.

In the self that is pure and clear, as in a glass can He be seen in this life ; but in the regions of the departed only as a remembrance of dreams. As reflections in trembling waters, He is seen in the lower heavens ; but in the highest region of heaven He again can be seen as clear as light from shade.

When the wise man knows that the material senses come not from the Spirit, and that their waking and sleeping belong to their own nature, then he grieves no more.

KATHA UPANISHAD

Beyond the senses is the mind, and beyond mind is reason, its essence. Beyond reason is the great Self, and beyond the great Self is the Unmanifest, the evolver of all.

Beyond the Unmanifest is the Spirit, all-pervading, with no qualities. When a mortal knows Him, he attains liberation and goes to life immortal.

His form is not in the field of vision : no one sees Him with mortal eyes. He is perceived by the heart, by thought and by mind. Those who know this attain life immortal.

When the five senses and the mind are still, and reason itself rests in silence, then begins the Path supreme.

This calm steadiness of the senses is called Yoga. Then one should become watchful, because Yoga comes and goes.

Words and thoughts cannot reach Him and He cannot be seen by the eye. How can He then be perceived except by him who says "He is" ?

In the faith of "He is" His existence must be perceived, and He must be perceived in His essence. When He is perceived as "He is," then shines forth the revelation of his essence.

When all desires that cling to the heart disappear, then a mortal becomes immortal. This is the sacred teaching.

When all the ties that bind the heart are unloosened, then a mortal becomes immortal. This is the sacred teaching.

One hundred and one subtle ways come from the heart. One of them rises to the crown of the head. This is the

EPILOGUE

way that leads to immortality ; the others lead to different ends.

Always dwelling in the heart of beings is the Ātman, the Purusha, the Self, a little flame in the heart. With calm power let one draw Him from the body, as the inner stem from the grass. Learn to know this immortal light ; yea, learn to know this immortal light.

And Nachiketas learnt the supreme wisdom taught by the god of after-life, and he learnt the whole teaching of Yoga, of inner-union. Then he reached Brahman, the Spirit Supreme, and became immortal and pure. So in truth will any one who knows his own higher Self.

PRAŚNA UPANISHAD

FIRST QUESTION

SUKEŚA BHĀRĀDVAJA, Śaibya Satyakāma, Sauryāyaṇi Gārgya, Kauśalya Aśvalayana, Bhārgava Vaidarbhi and Kabandhi Kātyāyana were students filled with devotion for Brahman, the Supreme Spirit, their minds rested on Brahman, and they were in search of the Highest Brahman. Once they said : "The holy Pippalāda can explain all the sacred teaching" ; and, thus thinking, they approached him, bringing as a sign of reverence fuel for the sacred fire.

The sage said to them : "Remain another year in steadiness, purity and faith. Ask then anything you desire and, if I know, I will tell you all."

When the time came, Kabandhi Kātyāyana approached the sage and said : "Master, whence came all created beings ?"

The sage replied : "In the beginning, the Creator longed for the joy of creation. He remained in meditation, and then came Rayi, matter, and Prāṇa, life. 'These two,' thought He, 'will produce beings for me.'"

The sun is life and the moon is matter. All that has form, solid or subtle, is matter : therefore form is matter.

THE JOURNEY AND THE END

When the rising morning sun enters the eastern skies, then he bathes in his light all life that is in the East. And then the South and the West and the North and all the sky are illumined by that light that gives life to all that lives.

Thus rises the sun as fire, as life in its infinite variety. It was said in a verse of the Rig-Veda :

“ The sun is rising in golden radiance ! The sun of a thousand rays in a hundred regions abiding ; the god omniscient, the aim of all prayers ; the light and fire supreme, the infinite life of all beings.”

The Lord of Creation is in truth the time of the year. This has two paths : the way of the South and the way of the North. Those who worship thinking, “ we have done sacrifices and pious works,” attain only the regions of the moon and return to life and death. Therefore those sages who desire children and the life of the family follow the path of the South. This is the material path that leads to the ancestors.

But those who in search of the inner Spirit follow the spiritual path of the North with steadiness, purity, faith and wisdom attain the regions of the sun. And there is the ocean of life, the refuge supreme, the lands of immortality where there is no fear. From there they do not return again : it is the end of the journey. There is a verse of the Rig-Veda that says :

“ Some speak of a Father who sends rain from the heaven of the North, resting on the seasons and showing himself

PRAŚNA UPANISHAD

in twelve ways. Others speak of a sage in the heaven of the South with a chariot of seven wheels and six spokes."

The day and night is the Lord of Creation. Day is life and night is matter. Those who join in love by day waste life ; but they follow the good path, those who join in love by night.

The dark fortnight is indeed matter, and the bright fortnight is life. Some sages perform their rituals in the bright fortnight ; but some in the time of darkness.

Food is in truth the Lord of Creation. From food seed is produced and from this beings are born.

Those who obey the law of the Lord of Creation, they in turn become creators and like him produce a pair. They attain the pale regions of the moon.

But those in whom there is no deceit, untruth or bad faith, who live in steadiness, purity and truth, theirs are the radiant regions of the sun.

SECOND QUESTION

Then Bhārgava Vaidarbhi asked : " Master, what are the powers that keep the union of a being, how many keep burning the lamps of life, and which amongst them is supreme ? "

The sage replied : " The powers are space, air, fire, water and earth ; and voice, mind, the eye and the ear. These powers light the lamps of life and say : ' We keep the union of this being and we are its foundation. ' "

LIFE

But life, the power supreme, said to them : " Do not fall into delusion. It is I who, in my fivefold division, keep the union of this being and I am its foundation." But they believed him not.

Life was offended and rose aloft to leave the body and all the powers had to rise and, life coming again to rest, all the powers had to rest. As when a queen-bee arises, all the bees with her arise, and when she comes to rest again then all again come to rest, even so it happened to the powers of the voice, the mind, the eye and the ear. The powers then understood and sang in joy this song of life.

Life is the fire that burns and is the sun that gives light. Life is the wind and the rain and the thunder in the sky. Life is matter and is earth, what is and what is not, and what beyond is in Eternity.

On life all things are resting, as spokes in the centre of a wheel. On life are resting the Vedas and prayers and warriors and priests.

To thee, resting with thy powers, O life, all beings offer adoration. As Lord of Creation thou movest in the womb of the mother, thence to be reborn.

Thou art the chief bearer of gifts to the gods, the first offering made to the departed, thou art the poetry of the seers, the truth of the ancient sages.

Thou art Rudra, the god of protection, thou art Indra in thy radiance, O life. As the sun that wanders in heaven, thou art Lord of all heavenly lights.

PRAŚNA UPANISHAD

When the rain pours down from heaven, O life, all thy creatures rejoice and they say : " Food for us shall be in abundance."

Thou art pure, O life, supreme seer, lord and consumer of all. We, the givers of what thou enjoyest, thou, our father, the breath of all life.

Be favourable unto us, O life, with that invisible form of thine which is in the voice, the eye and the ear, and which lives in the mind. Go not from us.

In thy power is all this world and even the third most sacred heaven. As a mother her child, protect us, O life : give us glory and give us wisdom.

THIRD QUESTION

Then Kauśalya Aśvalayana asked : " Master, this life, whence does it arise ? How does it come to this body ? How, after diffusing itself, does it abide here ? How does it leave the body ? How does it sustain the universe without and the universe within ? "

The sage replied : " Great are the questions you ask from me, but you are a great lover of Brahman : I will answer."

Life comes from the Spirit. Even as a man casts a shadow, so the Spirit casts the shadow of life, and as a shadow of former lives a new life comes to this body.

As when a ruler commands his officials and appoints them

THE POWERS OF LIFE

cities to be ruled in his name, even so Prāṇa, the power of life, rules the other living powers of the body.

Apāna rules its lower regions. Prāṇa itself lives in the eye and the ear and moves through the nose and the mouth. Samāna rules the middle regions, and distributes the life-giving offering of food. From Samāna come the seven flames.

In the heart dwells the Ātman, the Self. It is the centre of a hundred and one little channels. From each one of them come a hundred channels more. Seventy-two thousand smaller channels branch from each one of these. In all these millions of little channels moves the power of Vyāna.

Rising by one of them the living power of Udāna leads to the heaven of purity by good actions, to the hell of evil by evil actions, and if by both again to this land of man.

The sun is Prāṇa, the life of this universe, and he rises, giving joy to the life in human eyes. The divinity of the earth rules the lower regions of Apāna. Between the sun and the earth there is space or Samāna. Air is Vyāna.

Fire is Udāna. When that fire of life is gone, senses are absorbed in mind, and man comes to life again. His last thoughts lead him to Prāṇa and, accompanied by the living fire of Udāna and led by Ātman, the Spirit Himself, he goes to the regions deserved and desired in imagination.

He who thus knows the meaning of life, his offspring

PRAŚNA UPANISHAD

never dies and attains life everlasting. There is a verse that says :

“He who knows the rising of life and how it comes to the body, how it abides there in its fivefold division, and knows its relation to the inner Spirit, enjoys eternal life, enjoys eternal life.”

FOURTH QUESTION

Then Sauryāyaṇi Gārgya asked : “Master, how many powers sleep in man and how many remain awake ? Who is that Spirit that beholds the wonder of dreams ? Who enjoys the mystery of sleep with no dreams ? Who is that Spirit on whom all the others find rest ?”

The sage replied : “As when, before darkness falls, the rays of the setting sun all seem to become one in its circle of light, though at the hour of sunrise they all spread out again, even so all the powers of the senses become one in the higher power of the mind. Then a person does not see, hear, smell, taste or touch ; does not speak, receive or give, move, or enjoy joys of love. Then people say ‘he sleeps.’”

But in the city of the body the fires of life are burning : they sleep not. Apāna is like the sacred home fire for ever kept burning from father to son. Vyāna is like the fire of the South for offerings to the ancestors. Prāṇa is like the fire of the East lit up by the home fire.

Samāna is like the Hotri priest evenly distributing the two

EVEN AS BIRDS RETURN TO THEIR NEST

offerings of expiration and inspiration. The mind is the performer of the sacrifice ; and Udāna is its fruit, since every day it takes the mind in sleep to Brahman, the Almighty.

And in dreams the mind beholds its own immensity. What has been seen is seen again, and what has been heard is heard again. What has been felt in different places or far-away regions returns to the mind again. Seen and unseen, heard and unheard, felt and not felt, the mind sees all, since the mind is all.

But when the mind is overcome by its own radiance, then dreams are no longer seen : joy and peace come to the body.

Even as birds, O beloved, return to their tree for rest, thus all things find their rest in Ātman, the Supreme Spirit.

All things find their final peace in their inmost Self, the Spirit : earth, water, fire, air, space and their invisible elements ; sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch and their various fields of sense ; voice, hands and all powers of action, and their spheres of action ; mind, reason, the sense of "I," thought, inner light and all their objects ; and even life and all that life sustains.

It is the Spirit of man who sees, hears, feels perfumes, touches and tastes, thinks and acts and has all consciousness. And the Spirit of man finds peace in the Spirit supreme and eternal.

He who knows, O my son, that Eternal Spirit, incorporeal and shadowless, luminous and everlasting, attains that Eternal

PRAŚNA UPANISHAD

Spirit. He knows the all and becomes the all. A verse there is that says :

“He who knows, O my beloved, that Eternal Spirit wherein consciousness and the senses, the powers of life and the elements find peace, knows the All and has gone into the All.”

FIFTH QUESTION

Then Śaibya Satyakāma asked : “Master, that man who until the end of life rests on OM his meditation, where does he go after life ?”

The sage replied : “The Word OM, O Satyakāma, is the transcendent and the immanent Brahman, the Spirit Supreme. With the help of this sacred Word the wise attains the one or the other.”

OM, or AUM, has three sounds. He who rests on the first his meditation is illumined thereby and after death returns speedily to this world of men led by the harmonies of the Rig Veda. Remaining here in steadiness, purity and faith he attains greatness.

And if he rests his mind in meditation on the first two sounds, he is led by the harmonies of the Yajur Veda to the regions of the moon. After enjoying their heavenly joys, he returns to earth again.

But if, with the three sounds of the eternal OM, he places his mind in meditation upon the Supreme Spirit, he comes

THE THREE SACRED SOUNDS OF OM

to the regions of light of the sun. There he becomes free from all evil, even as a snake sheds its old skin, and with the harmonies of the Sama Veda he goes to the heaven of Brahmā wherefrom he can behold the Spirit that dwells in the city of the human body and which is above the highest life. There are two verses that say :

“The three sounds not in union lead again to life that dies ; but the wise who merge them into a harmony of union in outer, inner and middle actions becomes steady : he trembles no more.”

“With the harmonies of the Rig Veda unto this world of man, and with those of the Yajur Veda to the middle heavenly regions ; but with the help of OM the sage goes to those regions that the seers know in the harmonies of the Sama Veda. There he finds the peace of the Supreme Spirit where is no dissolution or death and where there is no fear.”

SIXTH QUESTION

Then Sukeśa Bhārādvaḥ said : “Master. Prince Hiraṇyanābha Kausalya came once to me and asked this question : ‘Do you know the Spirit of sixteen forms ?’ ‘I know him not,’ I answered the young prince. ‘If I knew him, how could I say that I knew him not ? For he who speaks untruth withers like a tree to the roots : I will not speak untruth.’ The prince became silent and mounting his chariot departed. And now I ask you. Where is that Spirit ?”

PRAŚNA UPANISHAD

The sage replied : “ O my son, the Spirit in whom sixteen forms arise is here within this body.”

The Spirit thought : In whose going out shall I go out, and in whose staying shall I stay ?

And he created life, and from life faith and space and air, light, water and earth, the senses and the mind. He created food and from food strength, austerity, sacred poems, holy actions and even the worlds. And in the worlds, name was created.

As when rivers flowing towards the ocean find there final peace, their name and form disappear, and people speak only of the ocean ; even so the sixteen forms of the seer of all flow towards the Spirit and find there final peace, their name and form disappear and people speak only of Spirit. There is a verse that says :

“ These forms in Him find rest like spokes in the centre of a wheel. Know ye the Spirit that should be known that death may afflict you not.”

Then the sage said to the disciples : “ Thus far I know the Supreme Spirit. There is nothing beyond.”

Bowing to him in adoration, the disciples said : “ You are in truth our father who has saved us from ignorance and has led us to the shore beyond.”

Adoration to the supreme seers. Adoration to the supreme seers.

MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

PART I

CHAPTER I

BRAHMĀ was before the gods were, the Creator of all, the Guardian of the Universe. The vision of Brahman, the foundation of all wisdom, he gave in revelation to his first-born son Atharvan.

That vision of Brahman given to Atharvan, he in olden times revealed to Angira. And Angira gave it to Satyavāha, who in succession revealed it to Angiras.

Now there was a man whose name was Śaunaka, owner of a great household, who, approaching one day Angiras with reverence, asked him this question : " Master. What is that which, when known, all is known ? "

The Master replied : Sages say that there are two kinds of wisdom, the higher and the lower.

The lower wisdom is in the four sacred Vedas, and in the six kinds of knowledge that help to know, to sing and to use the Vedas : Definition and grammar, pronunciation and poetry, ritual and the signs of heaven. But the higher wisdom is that which leads to the Eternal.

He is beyond thought and invisible, beyond family and

colour. He has neither eyes nor ears ; He has neither hands nor feet. He is everlasting and omnipresent, infinite in the great and infinite in the small. He is the Eternal whom the sages see as the source of all creation.

Even as a spider sends forth and draws in its thread, even as plants arise from the earth and hairs from the body of man, even so the whole creation arises from the Eternal.

In the fire of penance and meditation Brahman attains expansion and then comes primeval matter. And from this comes life and mind, the elements and the worlds and the eternity of action.

From the Spirit who knows all and sees all, whose Tapas is pure wisdom, from Him even Brahman comes, name and form and primal matter.

PART I

CHAPTER II

This is the truth : The actions of devotion that sages heard in sacred verses were told in many ways in the three Vedas. Perform them always, O lovers of the true : they are your path of holy action in this world.

When the flames of the sacred fire are rising, place then in faith the holy offerings.

If at the sacred fire of Agnihotra no heed is taken of the new moon, or of the full moon, or of the seasons of the year, or of the first fruits of spring ; if no guests are present, if the offering of the sacrifice is left undone, or not done

BEYOND THE SACRED FIRE

according to rule, or the offering to all the gods is forgotten, then the offerer does not attain the reward of the seven worlds.

The dancing flames of the sacred fire are seven : the black, the terrific, that which is swift as the mind, that which is dark with smoke, the deep red, the spark-blazing and the luminous omniformed flame.

If a man begins his sacrifice when the flames are luminous, and considers for the offerings the signs of heaven, then the holy offerings lead him on the rays of the sun where the Lord of all gods has his high dwelling.

And when on the rays of sunlight the radiant offerings raise him they glorify him in words of melody. "Welcome," they say, "welcome here. Enjoy the heaven of Brahmā won by pure holy actions."

But unsafe are the boats of sacrifice to go to the farthest shore ; unsafe are the eighteen books where the lower actions are explained. The unwise who praise them as the highest end go to old age and death again.

Abiding in the midst of ignorance, but thinking themselves wise and learned, fools aimlessly go hither and thither, like blind led by the blind.

Wandering in the paths of unwisdom, "we have attained the end of life," think the foolish. Clouds of passion conceal to them the beyond, and sad is their fall when the reward of their pious actions has been enjoyed.

MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

Imagining religious ritual and charity as the final good, the unwise see not the Path supreme. Indeed they have in high heaven the retribution of their pious actions ; but thence they fall and come to earth or even down to lower regions.

But those who in purity and faith live in the solitude of the forest, who have wisdom and peace and long not for earthly possessions, those in radiant purity pass through the gates of the sun to the dwelling-place supreme where the Spirit is in Eternity.

Beholding the worlds of creation, let the lover of God attain renunciation : what is above creation cannot be attained by action. In his longing for divine wisdom, let him go with reverence to a Teacher, in whom live the sacred words and whose soul has peace in Brahman.

To a pupil who comes with mind and senses in peace the Teacher gives the vision of Brahman, of the Spirit of truth and eternity.

PART II

CHAPTER I

This is the truth : As from a fire aflame thousands of sparks come forth, even so from the Creator an infinity of beings have life and to Him return again.

But the Spirit of light above form, never-born, within all, outside all, is in radiance above life and mind, and beyond this creation's Creator.

From Him comes all life and mind and the senses of all

ALL COMES FROM HIM

life. From Him comes space and light, air and fire and water, and this earth that holds us all.

The head of His body is fire, and His eyes the sun and the moon. His ears, the regions of heaven, and the sacred Vedas His word. His breath is the wind that blows, and this whole universe is His heart. This earth is His footstool. He is the Spirit that is in all things.

From Him comes the sun, and the source of all fire is the sun. From Him comes the moon, and from this comes the rain and all herbs that grow upon earth. And man comes from Him, and man unto woman gives seed : and thus an infinity of beings come from the Spirit supreme.

The verses of the Rig Veda and songs of the Sama Veda, prayers of the Yajur Veda and rites of initiation, sacrifices and offerings and gifts, the offerer of the sacrifice, the year and the worlds purified by the light from the sun and the moon, all come from the Spirit.

From Him the oceans and mountains, and all rivers flow from Him. And all herbs and the essence of all whereby the Inner Spirit dwells with the elements are from Him.

The Spirit in truth is all : action, and the fire of penance, and even Brahman supreme and immortality. Who knows Him dwelling in the secret place of the heart cuts asunder the bonds of ignorance even in this human life.

PART II

CHAPTER II

Radiant in His light, yet invisible in the secret place of the heart, the Spirit is the supreme abode wherein dwells all that moves and breathes and sees. Know Him as all that is and all that is not, the end of love-longing beyond understanding, the inmost best of all beings.

He is luminous and more subtle than the smallest, but in Him rest all the worlds and their beings. He is the everlasting Brahman, and He is life and word and mind. He is truth and life immortal. He is the goal to be aimed at ; attain this goal, O my son !

Take the great bow of the Upanishads and place an arrow sharp with devotion. Draw the bow with concentration on Him and hit the centre of the mark, the same Everlasting Spirit.

The bow is the sacred OM, and the arrow is Ātman, the Self. Brahman is the mark of the arrow, the aim of the soul. Even as the arrow rests in its mark, let the vigilant self rest in its aim.

In Him are woven the sky and the earth and the regions of the air, and in Him rest the mind and all the powers of life. Know Him as the One Self of all and leave aside other words. He is the bridge of Eternity.

Where all the subtle channels of the body meet, like spokes in the centre of a wheel, there He moves in the heart and transforms His one form into many. Upon OM, as the

THE LIGHT BEYOND ALL LIGHT

Self, place your meditation. Glory unto you in your far-away journey beyond darkness !

He who knows all and sees all, and whose glory the universe shows, dwells as the Spirit of the divine city of Brahman in the region of the human heart. He becomes mind and drives on the body and life, draws power from food and finds peace in the heart. There the wise find Him as joy and light and life eternal.

And when He is seen in His immanence and transcendence, then the ties of the heart are unloosened, the doubts of the mind vanish, and the law of Karma works no more.

In the supreme golden chamber is Brahman indivisible and pure. He is the radiant light of all lights, and this knows he who knows Brahman.

There the sun shines not, nor the moon, nor the stars ; lightnings shine not there and much less earthly fire. From His light all these give light ; and His radiance illumines all creation.

Far spreading before and behind, and right and left, and above and below, is Brahman, the Spirit eternal. In truth Brahman is all.

PART III

CHAPTER I

There are two birds, two sweet friends, who dwell on the self-same tree. The one eats the fruits thereof, and the other looks on in silence.

MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

The first is the human self who resting on that tree, though active, feels sad in his unwisdom. But on beholding the power and glory of the higher Self, he becomes free from sorrow.

When the wise seer beholds in golden glory the Lord, the Spirit, the Creator of the god of creation, then he leaves good and evil behind and in purity he goes to the unity supreme.

In silent wonder the wise one sees Him as the life flaming in all creation. This is the greatest seer of Brahman, who, performing his rites, in God, in Ātman, in the Self, finds all his peace and joy.

This Ātman is attained by truth and austerity, true wisdom and chastity. The wise who strive, see Him within the body in His pure glory and light.

Truth obtains victory, not untruth. Truth is the way that leads to the regions of light. Sages travel therein free from desires and reach the supreme abode of Truth.

He is immeasurable and luminous and beyond all thinking, and yet He shines smaller than the smallest. Far, far away is He, and yet He is very near, resting in the inmost chamber of the heart.

He cannot be seen by the eye, and words cannot reveal Him. He cannot be reached by the senses, or by austerity or sacred actions. By the grace of wisdom and purity of mind, He can be seen indivisible in the silence of meditation.

THE END OF ALL LONGING

This invisible Ātman can be seen by the mind, wherein the five senses are resting. All mind is woven with the senses ; but in a pure mind shines the light of the Self.

Whatever regions the pure in heart may see in his mind, whatever desires he may have in his heart, he attains those regions and wins his desires : let one who wishes for success reverence the seers of the Spirit.

PART III

CHAPTER II

Then he knows the supreme dwelling of Brahman wherein the whole universe shines in radiance. The wise who, free from desires, adore the Spirit pass beyond new death on earth.

A man whose mind wanders among desires, and is longing for objects of desire, goes again to life and death according to his desires. But he who possesses the End of all longing, and whose self has fulfilment, even in this life his desires fade away.

Not through much learning is the Ātman reached, not through the intellect or sacred teaching. He is reached by the chosen of Him. To His chosen the Ātman reveals His glory.

The Ātman is not reached by the weak, or the careless, or those who practise wrong austerity ; but the wise who strive by right means lead their Ātman into the dwelling of Brahman.

MUNDAKA UPANISHAD

Having reached that place supreme, the seers find joy in wisdom, their souls have fulfilment, their passions have gone, they have peace. Filled with devotion, they have found the Spirit in all and go into the All.

Those ascetics who know well the meaning of the Vedanta, whose minds are pure by renunciation, at the hour of departing find freedom in the regions of Brahman, and attain the supreme everlasting life.

The fifteen forms return to their sources and the senses to their divinities. Actions and the Self and his knowledge all go into the Supreme everlasting.

As rivers flowing into the ocean find there final peace and their name and form disappear, even so the wise becomes free from name and form and enters into the radiance of the Supreme Spirit who is greater than all greatness.

In truth who knows God becomes God.

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MĀNDŪKYA UPANISHAD

OM. This eternal Word is all : what was, what is and what shall be, and what beyond is in eternity. All is OM.

Brahman is all and Ātman is Brahman. Ātman, the Self, has four conditions.

The first condition is the waking life of outward-moving consciousness, enjoying the seven outer gross elements.

The second condition is the dreaming life of inner-moving consciousness, enjoying the seven subtle inner elements in its own light and solitude.

The third condition is the sleeping life of silent consciousness when a person has no desires and beholds no dreams. That condition of deep sleep is one of oneness, a mass of silent consciousness made of peace and enjoying peace.

This silent consciousness is all-powerful, all-knowing, the inner ruler, the source of all, the beginning and end of all beings.

The fourth condition is Ātman in His own pure state : the awakened life of supreme consciousness. It is neither outer nor inner consciousness, neither semi-consciousness nor sleeping consciousness, neither mere consciousness nor

MĀNDŪKYA UPANISHAD

unconsciousness. He is Ātman, the Spirit Himself, that cannot be seen or touched, that is above all distinction, beyond thought and ineffable. In the union with Him is the supreme proof of His reality. He is the end of evolution and is non-duality. He is peace and love.

This Ātman is the eternal Word OM. Its three sounds, A, U, and M, are the first three states of consciousness, and these three states are the three sounds.

The first sound A is the first state of waking consciousness, common to all men. It is found in the words "Apti," "attaining" and in "Ādimatvam," "being first." Who knows this attains in truth all his desires, and in all things becomes first.

The second sound U is the second state of dreaming consciousness. It is found in the words "Utkarsha," "uprising," and "Ubhayatvam," "bothness." Who knows this raises the tradition of knowledge and attains equilibrium. In his family is never born any one who knows not Brahman.

The third sound M is the third state of sleeping consciousness. It is found in the words "Miti," "measure," and in the root "Mi," "to end" that gives "Apiti," "final end." Who knows this measures all with his mind and attains the final End.

The Word OM as one sound is the fourth state of supreme consciousness. It is beyond the senses and is the end of evolution. It is non-duality and love. He goes with his self to the supreme Self who knows this, who knows this.

FROM THE TAITTIRĪYA UPANISHAD

I WILL speak words of truth and the words of the divine law shall be on my lips. . . . I, 1.

Master and disciple. May the light of sacred knowledge illumine us, and may we attain the glory of wisdom.

I, 3.

O Lord, let me come unto Thee and come Thou unto me, O Lord. In thy waters, O my Lord, may I wash my sins away.

I, 4.

What is needful?

Righteousness, and sacred learning and teaching.

Truth, and sacred learning and teaching.

Meditation, and sacred learning and teaching.

Self-control, and sacred learning and teaching.

Peace, and sacred learning and teaching.

Ritual, and sacred learning and teaching.

Humanity, and sacred learning and teaching.

Satyavacas, the Truthful, says : " Truth."

Taponitya, the Austere, says : " Austerity."

But Naka, who is beyond pain, says : " Learning and teaching. For they are austerity, for they are austerity." I, 9.

FROM THE TAITTIRĪYA UPANISHAD

Who knows Brahman as reality, consciousness and joy attains Brahman. II, 1.

Who denies God, denies himself. Who affirms God, affirms himself. II, 6.

Joy comes from God. Who could live and who could breathe if the joy of Brahman filled not the universe?

If a man places a gulf between himself and God, this gulf will bring fear. But if a man finds the support of the Invisible and Ineffable, he is free from fear. II, 7.

Words and mind go to Him, but reach Him not and return. But he who knows the joy of Brahman, fears no more. II, 9.

FROM THE CHĀNDOGYA UPANISHAD

BRAHMAN AND ĀTMAN

ALL this universe is in truth Brahman. He is the beginning and end and life of all. As such, in silence, give unto Him adoration.

Man in truth is made of faith. As his faith is in this life, so he becomes in the beyond : with faith and vision let him work.

There is a Spirit that is mind and life, light and truth and vast spaces. He contains all works and desires and all perfumes and all tastes. He enfolds the whole universe, and in silence is loving to all.

This is the Spirit that is in my heart, smaller than a grain of rice, or a grain of barley, or a grain of mustard-seed, or a grain of canary-seed, or the kernel of a grain of canary-seed. This is the Spirit that is in my heart, greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven itself, greater than all these worlds.

He contains all works and desires and all perfumes and all tastes. He enfolds the whole universe and in silence is loving to all. This is the Spirit that is in my heart, this is Brahman.

FROM THE CHĀNDOGYA UPANISHAD

To Him I shall come when I go beyond this life. And to Him will come he who has faith and doubts not. Thus said Śāṇḍilya, thus said Śāṇḍilya. III, 14.

Once Satyakāma went to his mother and said : "Mother, I wish to enter upon the life of a religious student : of what family am I ?"

To him she answered : "I do not know, my child, of what family thou art. In my youth, I was poor and served as a maid many masters, and then I had thee : I therefore do not know of what family thou art. My name is Jābāla and thy name is Satyakāma. Thou mayest call thyself Satyakāma Jābāla."

The boy went to the Master Hāridrumata Gautama and said : "I want to become a student of sacred wisdom. May I come to you, Master ?"

To him the Master asked : "Of what family art thou, my son ?"

"I do not know of what family I am," answered Satyakāma, "I asked my mother and she said : 'I do not know, my child, of what family thou art. In my youth, I was poor and served as a maid many masters, and then I had thee : I therefore do not know of what family thou art. My name is Jābāla and thy name is Satyakāma.' I am therefore Satyakāma Jābāla, Master."

To him Master Gautama said : "Thou art a Brahman, since thou hast not gone away from the truth. Come, my son, I will take thee as a student." IV, 4.

FATHER AND SON

OM. There lived once a boy, Śvetaketu Aruṇeya by name. One day his father spoke to him in this way : “ Śvetaketu, go and become a student of sacred wisdom. There is no one in our family who has not studied the holy Vedas and who might only be given the name of Brahman by courtesy.”

The boy left at the age of twelve and, having learnt the Vedas, he returned home at the age of twenty-four, very proud of his learning and having a great opinion of himself.

His father, observing this, said to him : “ Śvetaketu, my boy, you seem to have a great opinion of yourself, you think you are learned and you are proud. Have you asked for that knowledge whereby what was not heard is heard, what was not thought is thought, and what was not known is known ? ” “ What is that knowledge, father ? ” asked Śvetaketu.

“ Just as by knowing a lump of clay, my son, all that is clay can be known, since any differences are only words and the reality is clay.

“ Just as by knowing a piece of gold all that is gold can be known, since any differences are only words and the reality is only gold.

“ And just as by knowing a piece of iron all that is iron is known, since any differences are only words and the reality is only iron.”

Śvetaketu said : “ Certainly my honoured masters knew not this themselves. If they had known, why would

FROM THE CHĀNDOGYA UPANISHAD

they not have told me? Explain this to me, father." "So be it, my child."

VI, 1.

"Bring me a fruit from this banyan tree."

"Here it is, father."

"Break it."

"It is broken, Sir."

"What do you see in it?"

"Very small seeds, Sir."

"Break one of them, my son."

"It is broken, Sir."

"What do you see in it?"

"Nothing at all, Sir."

Then his father spoke to him.

"My son, from the very essence in the seed which you cannot see comes in truth this vast banyan tree.

"Believe me, my son, an invisible and subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe. That is Reality. That is Ātman. Thou art That."

"Explain more to me, father," said Śvetaketu. "So be it, my son."

VI, 12.

"Place this salt in water and come to me to-morrow morning."

Śvetaketu did as he was commanded, and in the morning his father said to him: "Bring me the salt you put into the water last night."

Śvetaketu looked into the water, but he could not find it, for it had dissolved.

THE LAND OF THE SPIRIT

His father then said : "Taste the water from this side. How is it?" "It is salt."

"Taste it from the middle. How is it?" "It is salt."

"Taste it from that side. How is it?" "It is salt."

"Look for the salt again and come again to me." The son did so, saying : "I cannot see the salt. I only see water."

His father then said : "In the same way, O my son, you cannot see the Spirit. But in truth He is here.

"An invisible and subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe. That is Reality. That is Truth. Thou art That." "Explain more to me, father." "So be it, my son."

VI, 13.

"Even as a man, O my son, who had been led blindfolded from his land of the Gandharas and then left in a desert place might wander to the East and North and South, because he had been taken blindfolded and left in an unknown place ; but if a good man took off his bandage and told him : 'in that direction is the land of the Gandharas, go in that direction,' then, if he were a wise man, he would go asking from village to village until he would have reached his land of the Gandharas, so it happens in this world to a man who has a Master to direct him to the land of the Spirit. Such a man can say : 'I shall wander in this world until I attain liberation ; but then I shall go and reach my Home.'

"This invisible and subtle essence is the Spirit of the whole universe. That is Reality. That is Truth. Thou art That."

VI, 14.

FROM THE CHĀNDOGYA UPANISHAD

Is there anything higher than thought ?

Meditation is in truth higher than thought. The earth seems to rest in silent meditation : and the waters and the mountains and the sky and the heavens seem all to be in meditation. Whenever a man attains greatness on this earth, he has his reward according to his meditation. VII, 6.

Where there is creation there is progress, where there is no creation there is no progress : Know the nature of creation.

Where there is joy there is creation. Where there is no joy there is no creation : Know the nature of joy.

Where there is the Infinite there is joy. There is no joy in the finite. Only in the Infinite there is joy : Know the nature of the Infinite.

Where nothing else is seen, or heard or known there is the Infinite. Where something else is seen, or heard or known there is the finite. The Infinite is immortal ; but the finite is mortal.

“ Where does the Infinite rest ? ” On His own greatness, or not even on His own greatness.

In this world they call greatness the possession of cattle and horses, elephants and gold, servants and wives, lands and houses. But I do not call this greatness, for here one thing depends upon another.

But the Infinite is above and below, North and South and East and West. The Infinite is the whole universe.

I am above and below, North and South and East and West. I am the whole universe.

FREEDOM

Ātman is above and below, North and South and East and West. Ātman is the whole Universe.

He who sees, knows and understands this, who finds in Ātman, the Spirit, his love and his pleasure and his union and his joy, becomes a Master of himself. His freedom then is infinite.

But those who see not this become the servants of other masters and in the worlds that pass away attain not their liberation.

VII, 21-25.

FROM THE BRIHADĀRANYAKA UPANISHAD

From delusion, darkness and death

Lead me

To Truth and Light and Life eternal. I, 3, 28.

“Maitreyi,” said one day Yājñavalkya to his wife, “I am going to leave this present life, and retire to a life of meditation. Let me settle my possessions upon you and Katyayani.”

“If all the earth filled with riches belonged to me, O my Lord,” said Maitreyi, “should I thereby attain life eternal?”

“Certainly not,” said Yājñavalkya, “your life would only be as is the life of wealthy people. In wealth there is no hope of life eternal.”

Maitreyi said : “What should I then do with possessions that cannot give me life eternal? Give me instead your knowledge, O my Lord.”

On hearing this Yājñavalkya exclaimed : “Dear you are to me, beloved, and dear are the words you say. Come, sit down and I will teach ; but hear my words with deep attention.”

Then spoke Yājñavalkya :

THE END OF ALL LOVE

"In truth, it is not for the love of a husband that a husband is dear ; but for the love of the Soul in the husband that a husband is dear.

It is not for the love of a wife that a wife is dear ; but for the love of the Soul in the wife that a wife is dear.

It is not for the love of children that children are dear ; but for the love of the Soul in children that children are dear.

It is not for the love of riches that riches are dear ; but for the love of the Soul in riches that riches are dear.

It is not for the love of religion that religion is dear ; but for the love of the Soul in religion that religion is dear.

It is not for the love of power that power is dear ; but for the love of the Soul in power that power is dear.

It is not for the love of the heavens that the heavens are dear ; but for the love of the Soul in the heavens that the heavens are dear.

It is not for the love of the gods that the gods are dear ; but for the love of the Soul in the gods that the gods are dear.

It is not for the love of creatures that creatures are dear ; but for the love of the Soul in creatures that creatures are dear.

It is not for the love of the all that the all is dear ; but for the love of the Soul in the all that the all is dear.

It is the Soul, the Spirit, the Self, that must be seen and be heard and have our thoughts and meditation, O Maitreyi. When the Soul is seen and heard, is thought upon and is known, then all that is becomes known.

Religion will abandon the man who thinks that religion is apart from the Soul.

FROM THE BRIHADĀRANYAKA UPANISHAD

Power will abandon the man who thinks that power is apart from the Soul.

The gods will abandon the man who thinks that the gods are apart from the Soul.

Creatures will abandon the man who thinks that creatures are apart from the Soul.

And all will abandon the man who thinks that the all is apart from the Soul.

Because religion, power, heavens, beings, gods and all rest on the Soul.

As when a drum is being beaten its sounds cannot be holden ; but by seizing the drum or the beater of the drum the sounds are holden.

As when a conch is being blown its sounds cannot be holden ; but by seizing the conch or the blower of the conch the sounds are holden.

As when a lute is being played its sounds cannot be holden ; but by seizing the lute or the player of the lute the sounds are holden.

So it is with the Spirit, the Soul.

As when a lump of salt is thrown into water and therein being dissolved it cannot be grasped again, but wherever the water is taken it is found salt, in the same way, O Maitreyi, the supreme Spirit is an ocean of pure consciousness boundless and infinite. Arising out of the elements into them it returns again : there is no consciousness after death." Thus spoke Yājñavalkya.

AN OCEAN OF SUPREME CONSCIOUSNESS

Thereupon Maitreyi said : “ I am amazed, O my Lord, to hear that after death there is no consciousness.”

To this Yājñavalkya replied : “ I am not speaking words of amazement ; but sufficient for wisdom is what I say.

For where there seems to be a duality, there one sees another, one hears another, one feels another's perfume, one thinks of another, one knows another. But when all has become Spirit, one's own Self, how and whom could one see ? How and whom could one hear ? How and of whom could one feel the perfume ? How and to whom could one speak ? How and whom could one know ? How can one know Him who knows all ? How can the Knower be known ? ”

II, 4.

THE SUPREME TEACHING

PROLOGUE

To Janaka king of Videha came once Yājñavalkya meaning to keep in silence the supreme secret wisdom. But once, when Janaka and Yājñavalkya had been holding a discussion at the offering of the sacred fire, Yājñavalkya promised to grant the king any wish and the king chose to ask questions according to his desire. Therefore Janaka, king of Videha, began and asked this question :

Yājñavalkya, what is the light of man ?

The sun is his light, O king, he answered. It is by the light of the sun that a man rests, goes forth, does his work and returns.

This is so in truth, Yājñavalkya. And when the sun is set, what is then the light of man ?

The moon then becomes his light, he replied. It is by the light of the moon that a man rests, goes forth, does his work and returns.

This is so in truth, Yājñavalkya. And when the sun and the moon are set, what is then the light of man ?

Fire then becomes his light. It is by the light of fire that a man rests, goes forth, does his work and returns.

THE LIGHT OF MAN

And when the sun and the moon are set, Yājñavalkya, and the fire has sunk down, what is then the light of man?

Voice then becomes his light ; and by voice as his light he rests, goes forth, does his work and returns. Therefore in truth, O king, when a man cannot see even his own hand, if he hears a voice after that he wends his way.

This is so in truth Yājñavalkya. And when the sun is set, Yājñavalkya, and the moon is also set, and the fire has sunk down, and the voice is silent, what is then the light of man?

The Soul then becomes his light ; and by the light of the Soul he rests, goes forth, does his work and returns.

What is the Soul? asked then the king of Videha.

WAKING AND DREAMING

Yājñavalkya spoke :

It is the consciousness of life. It is the light of the heart. Forever remaining the same, the Spirit of man wanders in the world of waking life and also in the world of dreams. He seems to wander in thought. He seems to wander in joy.

But in the rest of deep sleep he goes beyond this world and beyond its fleeting forms.

For in truth when the Spirit of man comes to life and takes a body, then he is joined with mortal evils ; but when at death he goes beyond, then he leaves evil behind.

The Spirit of man has two dwellings : this world and the world beyond. There is also a third dwelling-place :

THE SUPREME TEACHING

the land of sleep and dreams. Resting in this borderland the Spirit of man can behold his dwelling in this world and in the other world afar, and wandering in this borderland he beholds behind him the sorrows of this world and in front of him he sees the joys of the beyond.

DREAMS

When the Spirit of man retires to rest, he takes with him materials from this all-containing world, and he creates and destroys in his own glory and radiance. Then the Spirit of man shines in his own light.

In that land there are no chariots, no teams of horses nor roads ; but he creates his own chariots, his teams of horses and roads. There are no joys in that region and no pleasures nor delights ; but he creates his own joys, his own pleasures and delights. In that land there are no lakes, no lotus-ponds, nor streams ; but he creates his own lakes, his lotus-ponds and streams. For the Spirit of man is Creator.

It was said in these verses :

“Abandoning this body by the gate of dreams, the Spirit beholds in awaking his senses sleeping. Then he takes his own light and returns to his home, this Spirit of golden radiance, the wandering swan everlasting.”

“Leaving his nest below in charge of the breath of life, the immortal Spirit soars afar from his nest. He moves in all regions wherever he loves, this Spirit of golden radiance, the wandering swan everlasting.”

CREATION IN DREAMS

"And in the region of dreams, wandering above and below, the Spirit makes for himself innumerable subtle creations. Sometimes he seems to rejoice in the love of fairy beauties, sometimes he laughs or beholds awe-inspiring terrible visions.

People see his field of pleasure ; but He can never be seen."

So they say one should not wake up a person suddenly, for hard to heal would he be if the Spirit did not return. They say also that dreams are like the waking state, for what is seen when awake is seen again in a dream. What is true is that the Spirit shines in his own light.

"I give you a thousand gifts," said then the king of Videha, "but tell me the higher wisdom that leads to liberation."

When the Spirit of man has had his joy in the land of dreams, and in his wanderings there has beholden good and evil, he then returns to this world of waking. But whatever he has seen does not return with him, for the Spirit of man is free.

And when he has had his joy in this world of waking and in his wanderings here has beholden good and evil, he returns by the same path again to the land of dreams.

Even as a great fish swims along the two banks of a river, first along the eastern bank and then the western bank, in the same way the Spirit of man moves along beside his two dwellings : this waking world and the land of sleep and dreams.

THE SUPREME TEACHING

DEEP SLEEP

Even as a falcon or an eagle, after soaring in the sky, folds his wings for he is weary and flies down to his nest, even so the Spirit of man hastens to that place of rest where the soul has no desires and the Spirit sees no dreams.

What was seen in a dream, all the fears of waking, as being slain or oppressed, pursued by an elephant or falling into an abyss, is seen to be a delusion. But when like a king or a god the Spirit feels "I am all," then he is in the highest world. It is the world of the Spirit, where there are no desires, all evil has vanished and there is no fear.

As a man in the arms of the woman beloved feels only peace all around, even so the Soul in the embrace of the Ātman, the Spirit of vision, feels only peace all around. All desires are attained, since the Spirit that is all has been attained, no desires are there, and there is no sorrow.

There a father is a father no more, nor is a mother there a mother; the worlds are no longer worlds, nor the gods are gods any longer. There the Vedas disappear; and a thief is not a thief, nor is a slayer a slayer; the outcast is not an outcast, nor the baseborn a baseborn; the pilgrim is not a pilgrim and the hermit is not a hermit. Because the Spirit of man has crossed the lands of good and evil, and has passed beyond the sorrows of the heart.

There the Spirit sees not, but though seeing not he sees. How could the Spirit not see if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to see.

THE SPIRIT IS THE ALL

There the Spirit feels no perfumes, yet feeling no perfumes he feels them. How could the Spirit feel no perfumes if he is the All? But there is no duality there, no perfumes apart for him to feel.

There the Spirit tastes not, yet tasting not he tastes. How could the Spirit taste not if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to taste.

There the Spirit speaks not, yet speaking not he speaks. How could the Spirit speak not if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to speak to.

There the Spirit hears not, yet hearing not he hears. How could the Spirit hear not if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to hear.

There the Spirit thinks not, yet thinking not he thinks. How could the Spirit not think if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to think.

There the Spirit touches not, yet touching not he touches. How could the Spirit touch not if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to touch.

There the Spirit knows not, yet knowing not he knows. How could the Spirit not know if he is the All? But there is no duality there, nothing apart for him to know.

For only where there seems to be a duality, there one sees another, one feels another's perfume, one tastes another, one speaks to another, one listens to another, one touches another and one knows another.

But in the ocean of Spirit the seer is alone beholding His own immensity.

THE SUPREME TEACHING

This is the supreme world of Brahman, O king.

This is the path supreme. This is the supreme treasure. This is the world supreme. This is the supreme joy. On a portion of that joy all other beings live.

He who in this world attains success and wealth, who is Lord of men and enjoys all human pleasures, has reached the supreme human joy.

But a hundred times greater than the human joy is the joy of those who have attained the heaven of the ancestors.

A hundred times greater than the joy of the heaven of the ancestors is the joy of the heaven of the celestial beings.

A hundred times greater than the joy of the heaven of the celestial beings is the joy of the gods who have attained divinity through holy works.

A hundred times greater than the joy of the gods who have attained divinity through holy works is the joy of the gods who were born divine, and of him who has sacred wisdom, who is pure and free from desire.

A hundred times greater than the joy of the gods who were born divine is the joy of the world of the Lord of Creation, and of him who has sacred wisdom, who is pure and free from desire.

And a hundred times greater than the joy of the Lord of Creation is the joy of the world of Brahman, and of him who has sacred wisdom, who is pure and free from desire.

This is the joy supreme, this is the world of the Spirit, O king.

"I give you a thousand gifts," said then the king of

THE JOURNEY OF THE SPIRIT

Videha ; “ but tell me of the higher knowledge that leads to liberation.”

And Yājñavalkya was afraid and thought : “ Intelligent is the king : he has cut me off from all retreat.”

When the Spirit of man has had his joy in the land of dreams, and in his wanderings there has beholden good and evil, he returns once again to this the world of waking.

DEATH

Even as a heavy-laden cart moves on groaning, even so the cart of the human body, wherein lives the Spirit, moves on groaning when a man is giving up the breath of life.

When the body falls into weakness on account of old age or disease, even as a mango-fruit, or the fruit of the holy fig tree, is loosened from its stem, so the Spirit of man is loosened from the human body and returns by the same way to Life, wherefrom he came.

As when a king is coming, the nobles and officers, the charioteers and heads of the village prepare for him food and drink and royal lodgings, saying : “ the king is coming, the king is approaching,” in the same way all the powers of life wait for him who knows this and say : “ the Spirit is coming, the Spirit is approaching.”

And as when a king is going to depart the nobles and officers, the charioteers and the heads of the village assemble around him, even so all the powers of life gather about the soul when a man is giving up the breath of life.

THE SUPREME TEACHING

When the human soul falls into weakness and into seeming unconsciousness all the powers of life assemble around. The soul gathers these elements of life-fire and enters into the heart. And when the Spirit that lives in the eye has returned to his own source, then the soul knows no more forms.

Then a person's powers of life become one and people say : "he sees no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he feels perfumes no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he tastes no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he speaks no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he hears no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he thinks no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he touches no more." His powers of life become one and people say : "he knows no more."

Then at the point of the heart a light shines, and this light illumines the soul on its way afar. When departing, by the head, or by the eye or other parts of the body, life arises and follows the soul, and the powers of life follow life. The soul becomes conscious and enters into Consciousness. His wisdom and works take him by the hand, and the knowledge known of old.

Even as a caterpillar, when coming to the end of a blade of grass, reaches out to another blade of grass and draws itself over to it, in the same way the Soul, leaving the body and unwisdom behind, reaches out to another body and draws itself over to it.

HE THAT DOES GOOD BECOMES GOOD

And even as a worker in gold, taking an old ornament, moulds it into a form newer and fairer, even so the Soul, leaving the body and unwisdom behind, goes into a form newer and fairer : a form like that of the ancestors in heaven, or of the celestial beings, or of the gods of light, or of the Lord of Creation or of Brahmā, the Creator supreme, or a form of other beings.

The Soul is Brahman, the Eternal.

It is made of consciousness and mind : It is made of life and vision. It is made of the earth and the waters : It is made of air and space. It is made of light and darkness : It is made of desire and peace. It is made of anger and love : It is made of virtue and vice. It is made of all that is near : It is made of all that is afar. It is made of all.

KARMA

According as a man acts and walks in the path of life, so he becomes. He that does good becomes good ; he that does evil becomes evil. By pure actions he becomes pure ; by evil actions he becomes evil.

And they say in truth that man is made of desire. As his desire is, so is his faith. As his faith is, so are his works. As his works are, so he becomes. It was said in this verse :

“ A man comes with his actions to the end of his determination.”

Reaching the end of the journey begun by his works on

THE SUPREME TEACHING

earth, from that world a man returns to this world of human action.

Thus far for the man who lives under desire.

LIBERATION

Now as to the man who is free from desire.

He who is free from desire, whose desire finds fulfilment, since the Spirit is his desire, the powers of life leave him not. He becomes one with Brahman, the Spirit, and enters into the Spirit. There is a verse that says :

“When all desires that cling to the heart disappear, then a mortal becomes immortal, and even in this life attains Liberation.”

As the slough of a snake lies dead upon an ant-hill, even so the mortal body ; but the incorporeal immortal Spirit is life and light and Eternity.

Concerning this are these verses :

“I have found the small path known of old that stretches far away. By it the sages who know the Spirit arise to the regions of heaven and thence beyond to liberation.

It is adorned with white and blue, yellow and green and red. This is the path of the seers of Brahman, of those whose actions are pure and who have inner fire and light.”

Into deep darkness fall those who follow action. Into deeper darkness fall those who follow knowledge.

There are worlds of no joy, regions of utter darkness.

UNITY BEYOND VARIETY

To those worlds go after death those who in their unwisdom have not wakened up to light.

When awake to the vision of the Ātman, our own Self, when a man in truth can say "I am He," what desires could then lead him to grieve in fever for the body?

He who in the mystery of life has found the Ātman, the Spirit, and has awakened to His light, to him as creator belongs the world of the Spirit, for he is this world.

While we are here in this life we may reach the light of wisdom; and if we reach it not how deep is the darkness. Those who see the light enter life eternal: those who live in darkness enter into sorrow.

When a man sees the Ātman, the Self in him, God Himself, the Lord of what was and of what shall be, he fears no more.

Before whom the years roll and all the days of the years, Him the gods adore as the Light of all lights, as Life immortal.

In whom the five hosts of beings rest and the vastness of space, Him I know as Ātman immortal, Him I know as eternal Brahman.

Those who know Him who is the eye of the eye, the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind and the life of life, they know Brahman from the beginning of time.

Even by the mind this truth must be seen: there are not many but only One. Who sees variety and not the Unity wanders on from death to death.

Behold then as One the infinite and eternal One who is in radiance beyond space, the everlasting Soul never born.

THE SUPREME TEACHING

Knowing this, let the lover of Brahman follow wisdom. Let him not ponder on many words, for many words are weariness.

Yājñavalkya went on :

This is the great Ātman, the Spirit never born, the consciousness of life. He dwells in our own hearts as ruler of all, master of all, lord of all. His greatness becomes not greater by good actions nor less great by evil actions. He is the lord supreme, sovereign and protector of all beings, the bridge that keeps the worlds apart that they fall not into confusion.

The lovers of Brahman seek Him through the sacred Vedas, through holy sacrifices, charity, penance and abstinence. He who knows Him becomes a Muni, a sage. Pilgrims follow their life of wandering in their longing for His kingdom.

Knowing this, the sages of old desired not offspring. "What shall we do with offspring," said they, "we who possess the Spirit, the whole world?" Rising above the desire of sons, wealth and the world, they followed the life of the pilgrim. For the desire of sons and wealth is the desire of the world. And this desire is vanity.

But the Spirit is not this, is not this. He is incomprehensible, for He cannot be comprehended. He is imperishable, for He cannot pass away. He has no bonds of attachment, for He is free ; and free from all bonds He is beyond suffering and fear.

A man who knows this is not moved by grief or exulta-

THE SPIRIT OF MAN

tion on account of the evil or good he has done. He goes beyond both. What is done or left undone grieves him not.

This was said in this sacred verse :

“The everlasting greatness of the seer of Brahman is not greater or less great by actions. Let man find the path of the Spirit : who has found this path becomes free from the bonds of evil.”

Who knows this and has found peace, he is the lord of himself, his is a calm endurance, and a calm concentration. In himself he sees the Spirit, and he sees the Spirit as all.

He is not moved by evil : he removes evil. He is not burned by sin : he burns all sin. And he goes beyond evil, beyond passion and beyond doubts, for he sees the Eternal.

This is the world of the Spirit, O king. Thus spoke Yājñavalkya.

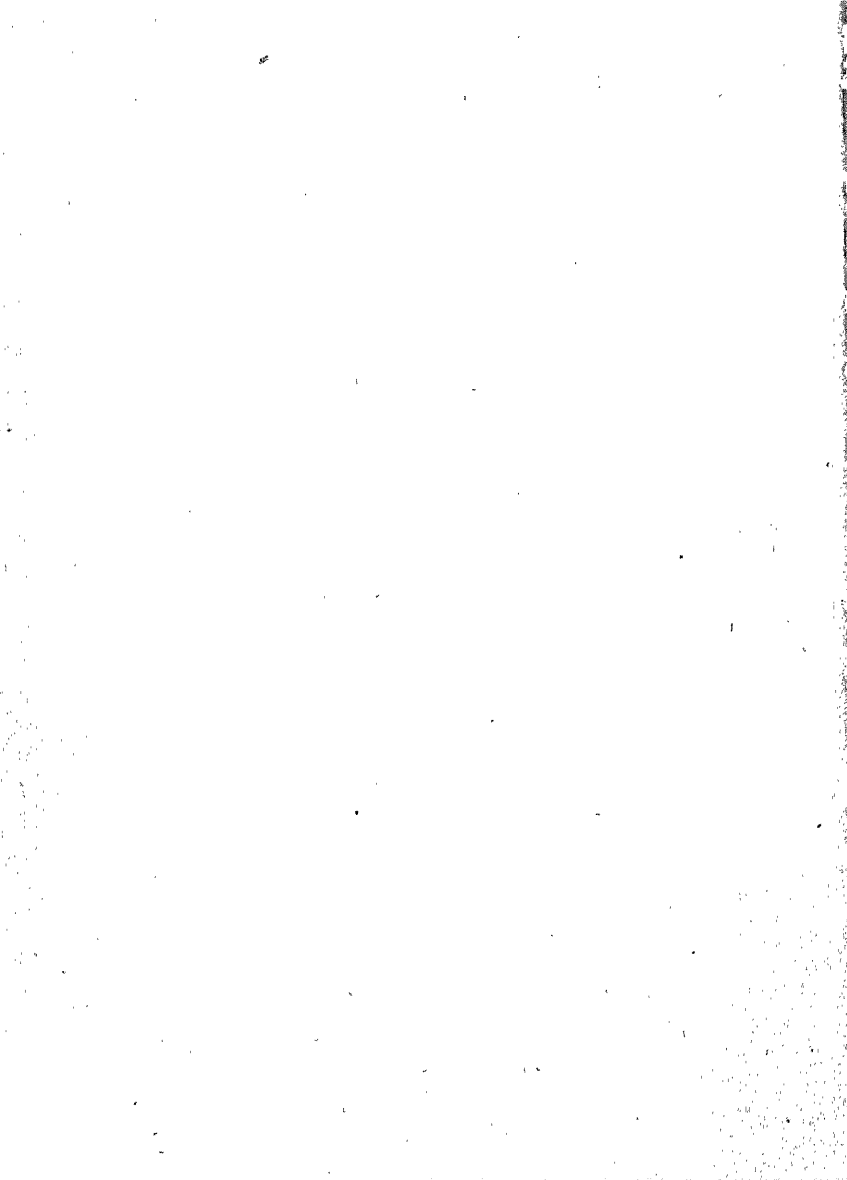
“O Master. Yours is my kingdom and I am yours,” said then the king of Videha.

EPILOGUE

This is the great never born Spirit of man, enjoyer of the food of life, and giver of treasure. He finds this treasure who knows this.

This is the great never born Spirit of man, never old and immortal. This is the Spirit of the universe, a refuge from all fear.

IV, 3.



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